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Title: Introduction of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Amendment) Bill, 2014.

HON. SPEAKER: Item No. 9, Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad.

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997.

HON. SPEAKER: Motion moved:

> "That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997."

PROF. SAUGATA ROY (DUM DUM): Madam, under Rule 72 (1) of the Rules of Procedure, I beg to oppose the introduction of the Bill further to amend the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997.

Madam, in my notice I have given the reasons why I am opposing this. This is for the first time a Bill; and before that an Ordinance is being brought in the interest of just one superannuated Government officer and for giving him a Government job. The Telecom Regulatory Authority was set up as a regulator in the telecom industry. It was to have an independent body having control over the whole telecom industry and that is why it was stipulated in the original Bill that after retirement from Chairmanship of the Telecom Regulatory Authority, a person would not be allowed to take up any Government job....(*Interruptions*) Now, in the interest of just one retired IAS officer, who is to be the Secretary to the Prime Minister, you are taking away the whole of the independence of the Telecom Regulatory Authority. The next man will come and he will kowtow to the Government so that after retirement he will get another plum posting in the Government. That is why this Bill should be opposed tooth and nail at this stage.

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD : Hon. Speaker, I have gone through the Rules in terms of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha. Kindly refer to Rule 72, under which hon. Member has sought to oppose the introduction. The very narrow window available to the hon. Member is that only the constitutionality of the Bill is sought to be questioned, namely, the Government of India has no such power under the Constitution to bring forward this Bill.

I am reading the proviso of Rule 72;

> "Provided that where a motion is opposed on the ground that the Bill initiates legislation outside the legislative competence of the House, the Speaker may permit a full discussion thereon:"

Therefore, the Government of India has got full power to bring any amendment in law relating to telecom. Telecom and Communications come under the jurisdiction of Government of India. When we go on merits – when the debate will start – the purpose of this whole amendment is nothing but to bring the Telecom Regulatory Authority on parity with Competition Commission, Pension Authority and Insurance Authority. Nothing specific has been done. Therefore, this whole opposition has got no merit in terms of rules and otherwise.

HON. SPEAKER: The question is:

> "That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: I introduce the Bill.